



Members of the General Law Committee

February 8, 2011

My name is Marlene F. McGann, I am the Executive Director of the Meriden and Wallingford Substance Abuse Council, a Regional Action Council on substance abuse and part of the CT Prevention Network. The RACs are on the front-line of prevention in every community in this State for problems of substance abuse, smoking prevention, gambling and other addictions. As such we work with a wide variety of community members and see the devastation that addiction to drugs and alcohol can bring to an individual, a family and a community.

I am here to address the issue of **extending alcohol sales to Sundays**. In my community we are not hearing support for Sunday sales from consumers or from small local retailers. The national Centers for Disease Control (CDC) "found strong and consistent evidence that limiting alcohol availability by maintaining existing limits on the days of sale is an effective strategy for preventing alcohol-related harms." Outcomes assessed in 14 studies indicated that increasing the days of sale leads to increases in excessive alcohol consumption and alcohol-related harms and that reducing the number of days that alcoholic beverages are sold generally decreases alcohol-related harms. Alcohol-related harms include motor vehicles injuries and deaths, violence-related and other injuries, domestic disturbance incidents, and police interventions with intoxicated people.

When New Mexico repealed a ban on Sunday off-premise sales of alcohol they found that the risk of death in an alcohol-related motor vehicle crash on Sunday increased by 26.8% relative to the risk of death in a crash on other days of the week after the ban was repealed. Three communities in New Mexico quickly reinstated the Sunday sales ban and posted much lower incidents of alcohol-related motor vehicle crashes than other communities in the state that allowed the Sunday sales. New Mexico overall showed an increase in alcohol-related fatalities in the 5 year period following the repeal of the ban which translated to more than \$6 million per year for the state.

Alcohol is not an emergency purchase. No one needs an "emergency six pack." It is already available 6 days a week until 9 pm. **Keeping the current hours and days of operation for the sale of alcoholic beverages will not put an undo hardship on responsible consumers and will help keep CT safe from the additional harms associated with the extension of days of sale. The CDC advocates that maintaining current restrictions on the days of sale "are effective public health strategies."**

Thank you.

Research citation: "Effectiveness of Policies Maintaining or Restricting Days of Alcohol Sales on Excessive Alcohol Consumption and Related Harms": Middleton, Hahn, et al. American Journal of Preventive Medicine, December 2010.